

**SB0869\_MACC\_FAV.pdf**

Uploaded by: Brad Phillips

Position: FAV

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**Senate Finance Committee**

March 5, 2026

**SB 869 - Economic Development - Maryland Workforce Launch Pilot Program - Establishment**

**Position: Favorable**

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The Maryland Association of Community Colleges (MACC), representing Maryland's 16 community colleges, strongly supports **SB 869**. The Maryland Workforce Launch Pilot Program represents a strategic and forward-thinking approach to economic development that aligns workforce preparation directly with business attraction. This legislation recognizes a fundamental reality: workforce readiness is one of the most powerful tools available to recruit and retain strategic industries. By providing customized, no-cost training through Maryland's community colleges as part of active business recruitment efforts, the State strengthens its competitive position when attracting companies from outside Maryland.

Maryland's community colleges are uniquely positioned to deliver the type of rapid, industry-specific, and scalable training envisioned in this bill. Colleges across the State have extensive experience designing customized training programs in partnership with employers, adapting curriculum quickly to meet emerging skill needs, and delivering instruction that aligns with performance outcomes and wage standards. Community colleges already serve as the State's primary engine for responsive workforce development, particularly in high-growth and strategic industries.

SB 869 builds on that capacity by formally integrating community colleges into the State's business recruitment strategy. The bill appropriately ensures that curriculum developed under the program remains the property of the community college, preserving institutional expertise and allowing the State to leverage training models for future partnerships. The inclusion of performance metrics and reimbursement provisions further demonstrates a thoughtful and accountable approach to economic development investment.

By pairing business attraction efforts with a guaranteed workforce pipeline, Maryland positions itself to compete more effectively for high-quality employers while creating meaningful career opportunities for Maryland residents. This model strengthens the connection between economic development and workforce strategy in a practical and results-driven manner.

MACC looks forward to continued partnership with the Department of Commerce and the General Assembly to ensure successful implementation of this pilot and to evaluate opportunities for expansion. Accordingly, MACC urges the Committee to issue a **FAVORABLE** report on **SB 869**.

Please contact Brad Phillips ([bphillips@mdacc.org](mailto:bphillips@mdacc.org)) or Drew Jabin ([djabin@mdacc.org](mailto:djabin@mdacc.org)) with questions.

# **SB 869\_Economic Development-Maryland Workforce Lau**

Uploaded by: Hannah Allen

Position: FAV



## Senate Bill 869

**Position: Favorable**

Committee: Finance

Date: March 5, 2026

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Founded in 1968, the Maryland Chamber of Commerce (the Chamber) is the leading voice for business in Maryland. We are a statewide coalition of more than 7,000 members and federated partners, and we work to develop and promote strong public policy that ensures sustained economic growth for Maryland businesses, employees, and families.

Senate Bill 869 (SB 869) establishes the Maryland Workforce Launch Pilot Program within the Department of Commerce to provide customized, no-cost workforce training in partnership with community colleges as a tool to attract and grow strategic industries in the State.

Maryland's ability to compete for new investment and job creation increasingly depends on the strength and responsiveness of its workforce pipeline. By aligning workforce training with the needs of targeted industries and offering tailored training solutions to prospective employers, this program would position Maryland more competitively when recruiting businesses considering relocation or expansion.

The Maryland Workforce Launch Pilot Program represents a strategic approach to workforce development by leveraging the expertise of the State's community colleges and coordinating efforts through the Department of Commerce. Programs like this can help close skills gaps, support business growth, and ensure Maryland workers are prepared for in-demand careers.

For these reasons, the Maryland Chamber of Commerce respectfully requests a **favorable report on SB 869**.

**\_SB 869 – Maryland Workforce Launch Pilot Program.**

Uploaded by: Lien Hoang

Position: FAV

ALONZO T. WASHINGTON  
*Legislative District 22*  
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Finance Committee



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THE SENATE OF MARYLAND  
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

The Honorable Pamela Beidle, Chair  
Finance Committee  
Maryland State Senate  
Annapolis, Maryland

**Re: SB 869 – Maryland Workforce Launch Pilot Program**  
**Position: Favorable**

Dear Chair Beidle and Members of the Committee:

I respectfully submit this testimony in support of Senate Bill 869, which establishes the Maryland Workforce Launch pilot program within the Maryland Department of Commerce as a new, targeted tool for business attraction and private-sector growth.

SB 869 is designed to help Maryland compete for relocating and expanding businesses by pairing business recruitment with rapid, no-cost workforce training—a model that has been used successfully in other states, including the nationally recognized Georgia Quick Start program. Through this pilot, Commerce would partner with one or two community colleges to deliver free, customized training for employees of qualified companies that relocate to Maryland.

As a pilot, SB 869 is intentionally focused and accountable. The program would concentrate on one or two industries aligned with the State's economic strategy and the training capabilities of participating community colleges. The Department of Commerce would administer the program, ensure participating companies are qualified business entities, and require that supported projects produce net new jobs in Maryland with good wages. Just as important, the bill includes safeguards: Commerce must ensure repayment to the State if a company fails to meet agreed-upon goals, and the Department must report on outcomes and progress to maintain transparency and performance.

Workforce costs are among the most significant expenses for businesses—yet skilled talent is essential to success. SB 869 builds on Maryland's competitive advantages: our strong higher education system, community college infrastructure, workforce training capacity, and highly skilled workforce. This pilot adds a flexible but targeted economic development tool that strengthens Maryland's ability to attract employers, expand opportunity for workers, and grow the private sector—helping us reduce overreliance on federal employment and broaden the State's economic base.

For these reasons, I respectfully request a favorable report on Senate Bill 869.

With regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alonzo T. Washington'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent initial 'A' and a long, sweeping underline.

**Alonzo T. Washington**  
Maryland State Senator

**SB 869\_Commerce\_INFO.pdf**

Uploaded by: Harry Coker

Position: INFO



Wes Moore | Governor  
Aruna Miller | Lt. Governor  
Harry Coker, Jr. | Secretary of Commerce

**DATE:** March 5, 2026  
**BILL NO:** Senate Bill 869  
**BILL TITLE:** Economic Development - Maryland Workforce Launch Pilot Program – Establishment  
**COMMITTEE:** Senate Finance  
**POSITION:** INFORMATIONAL ONLY

This bill establishes the Maryland Workforce Launch Pilot Program within the Maryland Department of Commerce (Commerce) to provide customized no-cost workforce training to businesses that do not yet have a presence in the State. The intent of the program is for it to be a businesses attraction tool to recruit qualified businesses in strategic industries to the State. Commerce provides the following information should it be helpful to the Committee in consideration of this legislation.

Commerce currently administers the Partnership for Workforce Quality (PWQ) program. PWQ provides matching training grants and support services targeted to improve the competitive position of Maryland companies. Grants are used to increase the skills of existing workers for new technologies and production processes, improve employee productivity and increase employment stability. Prioritization is given to manufacturing and technology companies. When PWQ was first started in FY 1999 the appropriation was over \$4M. The annual appropriation varied but slowly decreased from then until General Fund appropriations were paused in FY 2010. Funding for PWQ was reinstated in FY 2015 and it has received a \$1M appropriation each year since. From FYs 2021 through 2025 there have been 91 grants provided totaling about \$4.4M.

Commerce previously funded the Maryland WorkSmart Program, a collaboration with the Maryland Association of Community Colleges (MACC), and the Maryland Department of Labor. This was a statewide program run out of Anne Arundel Community College with a part-time Director. Most participants were state agencies and little private businesses. For this reason, the program was dismantled in 2019. There is currently an affinity group out of MACC, the Maryland Community College Association of Continuing Education and Training (MCCACET). MCCACET is a monthly meeting of all 16 community colleges deans and vice presidents along with representatives from Labor, Commerce, and the Maryland Higher Education Commission. These monthly meetings serve to provide updates and feedback and collaboration between the agencies and community colleges. Commerce uses these meetings to coordinate institutions to assist with businesses' workforce training needs.